

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and the following remarks.

At the outset, appreciation is expressed to Examiners Szewczyk and Lopez for the courtesy extended during the May 4, 2009 interview with the undersigned. The substance of the interview is reflected in the following remarks.

Claim 1, the only independent claim, is rejected as being anticipated by Japanese Laid-Open Document No. 2000-247663, hereinafter Masuhide.

As discussed during the interview and as reflected in the English translation of Masuhide submitted with this amendment, Masuhide discloses a glass-sheet flotation bed structure which uses heated air jets and includes a transfer bed 12 in which heated air is directed first through air ejection holes 18 toward a glass sheet to be supported, and then through air exits 20, 22. The air ejection holes 18 have a constant diameter, while the air exits 20, 22 are arranged so that the heated air passes first through the wider recessed portions 22 and then through the narrower exit holes 20 illustrated in Fig. 3 of Masuhide.

Amended Claim 1 is clearly distinguishable from the disclosure in Masuhide. For example, it is apparent from the above discussion that the air ejection holes 18 do not have an entry bore as well as a progressively widening exit hole. Indeed, the air ejection holes 18 have a constant diameter. It is also apparent from the above discussion that the air exits 20, 22 do not have an entry bore as well as a progressively widening exit hole while being in fluid communication with a source of compressed gas so that the compressed gas passes first through the entry bore and

then through the exit hole. Indeed, the heated air passes first passes first through wider recessed portions 22 and then through narrower exit holes 20.

For at least these reasons, Masuhide does not disclose a device for producing a gas cushion for supporting a preheated glass sheet, comprising a chamber connected to a source of compressed gas, the chamber including an upper wall having an external surface dimensioned to the outline of the glass sheet and having a plurality of apertures for the passage of gas, wherein the apertures are designed as nozzles, each having an entry bore as well as a progressively widening exit hole and each being in fluid communication with the source of compressed gas so that the compressed gas passes first through the entry bore and then through the exit hole, and that the external surface of the upper wall of the chamber has a greater degree of perforation (sum of exit areas of the exit holes in relation to total area) in edge zones of the external surface of the upper wall than in a central zone of the external surface of the upper wall which is completely surrounded by the edge zones, as recited in amended Claim 1.

Claim 1 is therefore allowable over Masuhide, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent claims. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in the dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful

in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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